THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY):

(a)	Army	84
	Assam Rifles	11
	Border Security Force	02
	Central Industrial Security Force	02
	Central Reserve Police Force	71
	Indo-Tibetan Border Police	Nil
	Sashastra Sewa Bal	Nil
	Total:	170

(b) The claims of the families of Armed Forces personnel dying in action are cleared within 2-3 months except in cases where documentation is not complete or court cases have been filed. However, such cases are monitored regularly at appropriate level. Review of benefits in such matters is undertaken at periodic intervals at appropriate levels.

Collision of submarine with merchant ship in Saurashtra

2066. DR. ABHISHEK MANU SINGHVI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

whether it is a fact that due to failure to detect a ship, a submarine of the Indian Navy collided with a merchant ship in January, 2008 in the Arabian sea, off the cost of Saurashtra;

if so, was it a human failure or a mechanical defect; and

whether such sensitive submarines are equipped with the latest, state of the art advanced technological developed instruments so as not to compromise the national security and lives of sailors and costly submarines?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) and (b) On the 7th January, 2008, the Indian Navy submarine, INS Sindhughosh, collided with a merchant ship in the Arabian Sea. A Board of Enquiry has been constituted by the Indian Navy to investigate into the circumstances leading to the collision, in addition to the ongoing investigation by the Mercantile Marine Department, Mumbai.

(c) Yes, Sir, the submarines are appropriately equipped.

Proposal to upgrade and modernise IMDs

2067. SHRI B J. PANDA: Will the Minister of EARTH SCIENCES be pleased to state:

whether it is proposed to upgrade and modernize Indian Meteorological Departments (IMDs) in the country;

if so, the details thereof; and

how far will this help to convey in advance accurate forecasts especially for the fanning community?

THE MINISTER OF EARTH SCIENCES (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Currently, Phase-I of the Modernization of observation and forecast facility of IMD alongwith other institutions of this Ministry is under implementation with a total cost of Rs. 920 Crores in 2-years of the Xl-Plan. Focusing on strengthening of the existing observational network with expansion, improving the forecasting methodology and quick dissemination of weather forecast assessments/warnings to the users, a comprehensive modernization programme is taken up with the following components:

Procurement of high performance computers for forecasting

Enhancement of observation systems including Automated Rain Gauges (ARG), Automatic Weather Stations (AWS), improved Radiosonde systems for upper level data, acquisition of Doppler Weather Radar (DWR) etc.

The modernisation plan observation and forecast systems are expected to produce high quality forecasts with improved monitoring capabilities to meet fully the multi-sector user requirements including the farming community.

(c) The successful implementation of the modernization plan is expected to enhance the quality of short range (1-3 days) and medium range (3-7 days) forecasts in the country. Such forecasts will lead to the operation of high quality services to the farming community.

Earthquake Observatory at Bhopal

† 2068. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of EARTH SCIENCES be pleased to state:

whether it is a fact that the earthquake observatory established at Bhopal has devised means to disseminate required information on tsunami and earthquake through Real Time Seismic Monitoring Network (RTSMN) machine;

the places where the said machine has been installed in the country;

the amount required thereon each year; and

the places where it is proposed to be installed in Eleventh Five Year Plan?

THE MINISTER OF EARTH SCIENCES (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) Yes, Sir. The seismological observatory established at Bhopal is part of the national network. This national network assists in monitoring the earthquakes in near real time both within and vicinity of the country. Such national network functions in partnership with other networks in the region for Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning so as to accurately locate earthquakes occurring over Indian Ocean basin that are capable of generating tsunami waves especially over Indonesia-Andaman & Nicobar-Myanmar in the Bay of Bengal segment and over the Makran coast over the Arabian Sea segment.

The RTSMN consists of 17 field stations spread over the country located respectively at Bhopal, Bhuj, Chennai, Bokaro, Pune, Thiruvananthapuram, Visakhapatnam, Shillong, Goa, Dehradun, Shimla, Portblair, Diglipur, Campbell Bay, Minicoy, Dharmasala and Hyderabad.

The recurring cost of RTSMN operations and maintenance will be of the order of Rs. 70 lakhs per annum.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.